REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed December 14, 2005, the Examiner noted that claims 1-11 were pending, and rejected claims 1-11. Claims 1, 3-11 have been amended, and, thus, in view of the forgoing claims 1-11 remain pending for reconsideration which is requested. No new matter has been added. The Examiner's rejections are traversed below.

In the Office Action the Examiner rejected claims 1-11 under 35 U.S.C. section 112 paragraph 2 as indefinite. The claims have been amended in consideration of the Examiner's comments and it is submitted they satisfy the requirements of the statute. If additional concerns with the claims arise, the Examiner is invited to telephone to resolve the same. Suggestions by the Examiner are also welcome. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

On page 2 the Examiner objected to claims 6, 7 and 10 and these claims have been amended in view of the Examiner's comments. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

On page 6 the Examiner indicated that claim 6 would be allowed if the concerns discussed above were addressed. It is submitted that claim 6 is now allowable

On page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 2 and 8-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as anticipated by Lawrence. Page 5 of the Office Action rejects claims 3-5 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Lawrence and Muller.

Lawrence discusses non-feature based recognition using a mixture distance approach. Lawrence describes a technique in which an average face is subtracted from a training image to obtain a face with which a PCA is used to find an Eigenface. These Eigenfaces are ranked and used to form vectors used in pattern recognition.

In contrast, the present invention (see claims 1 and 5-11) calculates a discriminant function by calculating difference vectors which are a difference between a feature vector of each pattern and an average feature vector, calculating an expected value of a probability density function using an error distribution corresponding the difference vectors as the probability density function and calculating the value of the discriminant function for the specific category based on the expected value. Lawrence does not teach or suggest such.

Muller adds nothing to Lawrence with respect to the features of the invention discussed above.

It is submitted that the invention of the independent claims distinguishes over the prior art and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

It is submitted that the claims satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112. It is also submitted that claim 6 continues to be allowable. It is further submitted that the claims are not taught, disclosed or suggested by the prior art. The claims are therefore in a condition suitable for allowance. An early Notice of Allowance is requested.

If any further fees, other than and except for the issue fee, are necessary with respect to this paper, the U.S.P.T.O. is requested to obtain the same from deposit account number 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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